Campus Alberta
Quality Council

Sixth Annual Report

1 April 2009 • 31 March 2010

Campus Alberta Quality Council

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30 June 2010

Honourable Doug Horner
Deputy Premier and Minister of Advanced Education and Technology
324 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

Dear Mr. Horner:

RE: Campus Alberta Quality Council Sixth Annual Report

On behalf of the Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC), I have the honour of providing you with the Sixth Annual Report for the period 1 April 2009 through 31 March 2010.

The 2009-2010 year was very active for CAQC as it reviewed a number of proposals for new degree programs brought forward by Albertan and non-resident post-secondary institutions. On Council's recommendation, you subsequently approved thirteen degree programs including eight undergraduate and five graduate programs. You deferred approval of another eight programs proposed by Alberta's public institutions due to the current fiscal constraints. Furthermore, fourteen program proposals were undergoing Council's review as of the end of the reporting period.

In addition to assessing the quality of new program proposals, Council was active in developing and refining its policies and procedures. With the participation of its stakeholders, Council developed its guidelines for Degrees Involving Diplomas as well as the guidelines for certain professional programs, both of which were added to the *CAQC Handbook*. As the total number of programs approved on CAQC's recommendation since its creation in 2004 has reached 108 Council is now devoting increasing attention to its monitoring practices to ensure that approved degree programs continue to meet quality standards.

The Proposal Review Standing Committee (PRSC) is one mechanism Council uses to increase the efficiency and cost effectiveness of its operations. Council delegates authority to make certain decisions on its behalf to PRSC, the members of which communicate and make decisions on program proposals undergoing a fully expedited review through a SharePoint site.

We believe that CAQC has acted as a catalyst for the further development of a quality culture in Campus Alberta. Our review process has ultimately enhanced the quality of most of the degree programs we have considered. We have engaged external reviewers from both Alberta and other Canadian institutions in these reviews, a practice that has helped to promote Alberta's post-secondary system nationally and internationally. Our review teams continue to be composed of academics of very high quality — acknowledged experts in their disciplines, many of them with considerable past experience in program development or other aspects of university administration.

Council is cognizant of the current economic downturn, which, among other things, has caused delays in implementing new degree programs and slowed hiring practices at some institutions. In this time of financial constraint, we applaud the ingenuity of institutions in meeting quality standards as well as efforts to collaborate within the system. The volume of work that the Secretariat and Council have managed continued to be significant during this time of constraint, but we remain conscious of the need to be as responsive as our resources allow in order to meet the expectations of institutions in the system.

Council has asked me to share with you our gratitude to the Secretariat staff, under the leadership of Marilyn Patton, for their hard work, thorough research, astute judgment and commitment to quality assurance within Campus Alberta.

Sincerely,

Ronald B. Bond, PhD
Chair

CAQC Mandate

The Campus Alberta Quality Council is an arms-length quality assurance agency that makes recommendations to the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology on applications from post-secondary institutions seeking to offer new degree programs in Alberta under the terms of the *Post-secondary Learning Act and* the *Programs of Study Regulation (91/2009)* (which replaced the *Approval of Programs of Study Regulation (51/2004)).*

Other than degrees in divinity, all new degree programs to be offered in Alberta must be approved by the government. Therefore, Council is charged with the quality review and monitoring of all degree programs proposed by:

- resident public institutions
- resident private institutions, both for-profit and non-profit
- non-resident (out-of-province) public institutions and both for-profit and non-profit private institutions

Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act

In response to the requirements of the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act*, Council developed its Mandate and Roles Document, which was signed by the Minister and Council's Chair on 19 November 2009. The document is posted on CAQC's website as well as the Agency Governance Secretariat's website. During the reporting period, CAQC also started to develop its Competency Matrix that outlines the skills, experience and knowledge members require both as a collective and individually to carry out activities of Council.

Activities of Council

Council is committed to ensuring the quality of approved degrees, and also encourages institutions that offer approved degree programs in Alberta to continue improving the quality of their degree programs. During the reporting year, Council held five meetings (four two-day and one one-day meetings) and focused on the following areas of activity:

- conducting program and comprehensive evaluations
- making recommendations to the Minister on applications from post-secondary institutions seeking to offer new degree programs
- developing and refining Council's procedures and assessment practices with respect to resident institutions applying to offer degree programming in Alberta
- developing processes for assessment and approval of degree programs offered by non-resident institutions to align them with current quality expectations in Alberta
- developing a protocol for assessing collaborative degrees that were not reviewed as part of an original program proposal submission
- monitoring approved degree programs offered by resident and non-resident institutions to ensure their compliance with Council's conditions and minimum quality standards
- offering advice to institutions on quality standards
- communicating the role of Council to stakeholders within the province and to relevant national bodies as well as with other provincial quality assurance agencies and the public

Keeping with its desire to meet with representatives of Campus Alberta institutions, Council has continued to hold its meetings at various institutions across the province. In 2009-2010, Council met at Red Deer College, Canadian University College, The Banff Centre, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and Grant MacEwan University. During the meetings, the host institution had an opportunity to make a presentation to Council members on their current programs and future plans.

Establishing and Refining Procedures and Assessment Standards and Guidelines

During the reporting year, Council continued to make refinements to the *CAQC Handbook,* posted on its website and designed primarily to provide guidance to post-secondary institutions as they seek to understand CAQC's standards, policies and procedures. The following materials were added to or revised in the *Handbook*:

- Statement on governance and administration
- CAQC Expectations for Design and Structure of Undergraduate Degrees (to include guidelines for Nursing degrees as well as Degrees Involving Diplomas)
- Graduate Program Proposal Guidelines and Assessment Standards

As well, Council made revisions to the Toolkit for Off-site and Cross-border Delivery of Programs.

To facilitate Council's work, the CAQC Secretariat has continued to maintain and enhance the utility of the SharePoint site for members through increasing accessibility to review documents and continuing education materials.

Action Plan

During the reporting period, Council has continued to implement strategies as outlined in its action plan, which was developed based on the results of an independent contractor's report of CAQC's three-year external review conducted in 2007-2008 and adopted by Council in July 2008. In 2009-2010, enhancements were made with respect to the orientation practices for new Council members and the Council's *Handbook*. Council's Chair and the Secretariat have continued conducting environmental scans of the best quality assurance practices within and outside Alberta and to streamline the application processes to the Ministry. The plan's action items are incorporated into Council's 2009-2012 Management Plan.

Subcommittees

Council has one standing committee, and during the reporting period discontinued one and established three ad-hoc committees to facilitate its work.

Proposal Review Standing Committee

In keeping with its commitment to act expeditiously, Council's Proposal Review Standing Committee (PRSC) acts on behalf of the full Council in reviewing requests for expedited reviews and conducting desk reviews of proposals undergoing fully expedited reviews. In addition, the committee reviews substantive changes to approved degree programs. In 2009-2010, PRSC reviewed 13 requests for fully expedited reviews. It conducted 10 desk reviews of program proposals and made recommendations to the Minister with respect to their approval. The Committee also reviewed one program name change request and one request to introduce program changes.

Nomenclature and Degree Programs Subcommittee

During the reporting year, the Nomenclature and Degree Programs Subcommittee held two meetings (one face-to-face and one via teleconference). This Subcommittee consisted of four Council members and representatives from three stakeholder groups: the Alberta Universities Association (AUA), the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes (AACTI), and the Independent Academic Institutions Council (IAIC). In 2009-2010, the Subcommittee finalized baccalaureate guidelines for Degrees Involving Diplomas (2+2 programs) and Nursing degree programs. Both of these documents were approved by Council and incorporated in the *CAQC Expectations for Design and Structure of Undergraduate Degrees* section of the Handbook. As the Nomenclature and Degree Programs Subcommittee had completed its work on the development of the *Expectations* section, Council agreed to disband this Subcommittee at its December 2009 meeting.

Comprehensive Evaluation Subcommittee

As Council now has experience in conducting comprehensive evaluations of the institutions offering approved degree programs, at its June 2009 meeting, it established a subcommittee to review the process and documentation related to comprehensive evaluations. The subcommittee has been working on revising the Comprehensive Evaluations section in Council's *Handbook* as well as the Self-Study Guidelines for Comprehensive Evaluations. The review is based on Council's and Secretariat's experiences with comprehensive evaluations as well as the feedback received from institutions and reviewers who have been part of past comprehensive evaluations. The subcommittee will continue its work on refining these documents in 2010-2011.

Graduate Programs Standards Subcommittee

The Graduate Programs Standards Subcommittee was established in June 2009 to review and refine the Graduate Program Proposal Guidelines and Assessment Standards based on feedback received from the AUA. After adopting revisions to this document at its September 2009 meeting, Council agreed with the subcommittee's recommendation that the guidelines and standards undergo a more thorough review in order to address further issues raised by the AUA, as well as assessing CAQC's experience to date in using the standards to review graduate programs. The subcommittee held a meeting with the provosts and deans of graduate studies of AUA member institutions in December 2009.

CAQC/AUA Joint Quality Assurance Audit Committee

To clarify its monitoring role with respect to approved degree programs at AUA institutions, Council is working with AUA on a pilot project to audit the institution's periodic quality assurance processes. The audit method is successfully used in some jurisdictions in Canada and worldwide for monitoring internal quality assurance policies and procedures at mature post-secondary institutions. An initial meeting of the committee was held in December 2009. At the end of the reporting period, the committee was working on developing its terms of reference and processes for the pilot project.

Stakeholder Engagement

Promoting openness and transparency in all its practices, Council works with stakeholders as it develops policies and guidelines to assess and enhance the quality of degree programs. For example, during the reporting year AUA, AACTI, and IAIC vetted the guidelines for Degrees Involving Diplomas (2+2 degrees) and Nursing guidelines before they were adopted by Council. In addition, in preparing the guidelines for Degrees Involving Diplomas, Council consulted with the Senior Academic Officers (SAOs) of the Alberta public colleges and technical institutes as well as the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) in order to clarify Council's role in evaluating the diploma component of a degree program. Based on feedback received from the stakeholders, Council's Nomenclature and Degree Programs Subcommittee also prepared Questions and Answers with Respect to CAQC's Guidelines for Degrees Involving Diplomas to provide clarification and interpretation of the guidelines. As well, Council actively consulted with the Nursing Education Program Approval Board (NEPAB) on developing and refining its Nursing degree guidelines. Upon Council's approval, this document was added to its *Expectations for Design and Structure of Undergraduate Degrees*.

CAQC has continued working with AUA and the Ministry on the Template and Review Process Pilot Project regarding the format and content of program proposals from AUA members as well as on the development of the audit pilot project.

In 2009-2010, meetings were held with the Honourable Doug Horner, Deputy Premier and Minister of Advanced Education and Technology, Deputy Minister Annette Trimbee, and Assistant Deputy Minister Connie Harrison. Meetings also took place with other officials from the Ministry to:

- ensure that the department's system coordination reviews and Council's quality assessment reviews are coordinated as much as possible
- ensure that information requirements with respect to program proposals are harmonized
- ensure that annual reporting by public and private institutions to the department and Council is coordinated
- ensure Council's input into the ongoing discussion within the Ministry with respect to quality assurance and accountability in the post-secondary system in Alberta
- develop new approval and monitoring processes for programs offered by non-resident institutions
- develop a case study for the approval of new specializations in doctoral-level degree proposals and to determine if streamlining of the process is possible.

Council continued to enhance collaboration with ACAT to benefit Alberta learners. During the reporting year, through its Secretariat, Council has been helping ACAT with its project to identify best practices with respect to learner progression opportunities and practices among Alberta's post-secondary institutions.

Council's Chair and the Director and the Manager of the CAQC Secretariat communicated regularly with officials from post-secondary institutions (resident and non-resident) and other stakeholders to explain Council's principles and procedures and to seek input on the best ways to serve the interests of the post-secondary system and its learners.

Meetings (in person or by phone) also took place with representatives of the following:

Alberta Universities Association
Senior Academic Officers
Nursing Education Program Approval Board
Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations
Deans of Graduate Studies
Chongqing University Institute for Higher Education, Chongqing, China

Conferences and Presentations

As it is important that Council's assessments be recognized and understood both within and outside the province, Council's Chair and Secretariat Director attended meetings and conferences and, in some cases, made presentations relating to the work of Council. These included:

Event	*Location*	*Attendee*
NAIT's BTech Capstone Applied Research Project Symposium	*Edmonton, AB*	*Marilyn Patton*
Student Orientation Training	*Edmonton, AB*	*Ronald Bond*
Independent Academic Institutions' SAOs	*Edmonton, AB*	*Marilyn Patton*

National and International Initiatives

To promote the national and international recognition of Alberta degrees in the absence of national accreditation in Canada as well as to learn about best practices in quality assurance in other jurisdictions, it is vital that provincial representatives communicate regularly. The development of connections through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and among provincial quality assurance agencies has thus been a priority.

Council's Secretariat is involved in an important national initiative – the CMEC Quality Assurance Subcommittee, which continues to be chaired by Marilyn Patton, Director of Council's Secretariat. The Subcommittee's work at the pan-Canadian level not only improves the understanding of degrees granted by Alberta institutions and how they are assessed, but also facilitates interprovincial student mobility. Another important initiative of the Subcommittee is to develop discussion papers on various topics relating to degree quality in Canada, as mandated by CMEC's Postsecondary Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee.

The work of CAQC is attracting international attention. In September 2009, Marilyn Patton met with Professor Yansun Wu from Chongqing University Institute for Higher Education in China to explain Council's procedures. Professor Wu was on a study tour in Canada to learn about quality assurance in Canada.

Evaluations and Recommendations

Council is an integral component of the program approval process in Alberta. When an institution submits an application to the Minister to offer a new program, the proposal first undergoes a system coordination review by Ministry staff to determine whether there is a need for the program and how it fits with other programs offered within the provincial post-secondary system. If the outcome of the system coordination review is positive, the Minister may refer the proposal to CAQC for a quality review and a recommendation on whether to approve the proposed program. After receiving Council's recommendation, the Minister makes a decision on whether to approve the program. Funding of the program is a separate consideration, which does not involve Council.

The process of approval for new degree programs being proposed is as follows:

Application to the Minister

↓

System coordination review by Ministry

↓

Referral to Council for organizational review (if necessary) and program quality review

↓

Council's recommendation to the Minister

↓

Minister's Decision

Council's evaluation process is rigorous, depends heavily on peer-review, and takes into consideration the experience of an institution in offering degree programming. When an institution proposes its first degree program, a first degree program at a new level, or other precedent-setting degree, it will normally be subject to a full assessment by Council, including both an organizational and a program review.

For institutions that have experience in offering degree programs at the level of the degree being proposed, a fully expedited review (no organizational evaluation and a desk review by Council's PRSC and Secretariat rather than engaging external evaluators for the program review) or partially expedited review (one not requiring an organizational evaluation) may be possible. Council's criteria for granting expedited reviews are published on its website.

Council is committed to having review processes that are iterative. It works closely with institutions during the review process and after a program's approval to foster continuous development and enhancement of degree programs.

Applications Referred to Council and Council Recommendations

Of the 23 programs recommended by Council for approval to the Minister, 16 were baccalaureate programs and seven were graduate programs. One application has undergone a full assessment by Council, including both an organizational and program review; 12 programs were subject to a partially expedited review using CAQC-appointed external evaluation teams. The remaining 10 programs undergone fully expedited review by PRSC acting on behalf of Council. Subsequently, the Minister approved 13 programs on Council's recommendation and deferred the approval of eight programs due to the current fiscal situation. Two programs are pending the Minister's decision.

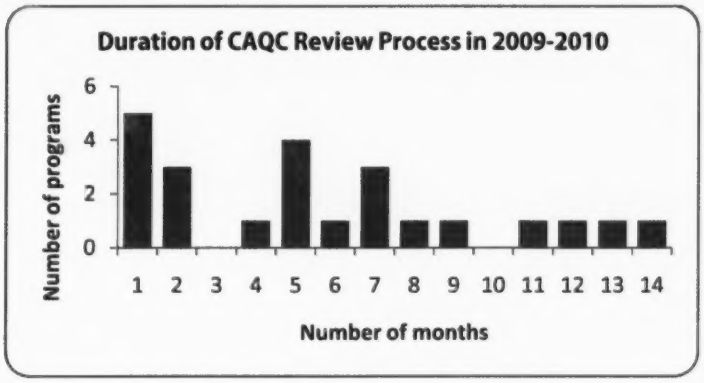
On 31 March 2010, Council had 14 program referrals that were at various stages of review (for details see the table below).

Of the 14 proposals that are currently under CAQC's consideration six were submitted by non-resident institutions. The increased activity in this area stems from the requirement that both Canadian and international non-resident institutions currently offering (or planning to offer) degree programs in Alberta must align with quality expectations for resident institutions in our jurisdiction.

In 2009-2010, the period of time between Council's receipt of an institution's full program proposal and Council's recommendation to the Minister ranged from less than one month to 14 months, with 78% of the proposals reviewed within eight months. It took less than one month to review and make a recommendation to the Minister with respect to five programs that underwent a fully expedited review by PRSC.

The time required for Council to make a recommendation is affected by various factors such as the completeness of the institution's final proposal (e.g., presence of reports by independent academic experts), whether or not an organizational evaluation is required before the program review, the time it takes to recruit external reviewers and establish a site visit date mutually agreeable to all reviewers and the institution (e.g., reviews typically do not occur in the summer),

and whether or not the institution is asked to provide further refinements of the proposal or supply missing information before a recommendation can be made to the Minister.



The following table outlines the proposals referred to Council by the Minister and the degree programs approved or deferred by the Minister on recommendation of Council between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010.

Alberta Public Institutions Program	**Type of Review**	**CAQC Recommendation**	**Minister's Decision**	**Date****
Grant MacEwan University (formerly Grant MacEwan College)				
4-year Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting)	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*25 March 2010*
4-year Bachelor of Communication Studies (Professional Communication)	*Program*	*Under Review*		
4-year Bachelor of Communication Studies (Journalism)	*Program*	*Under Review*		
Lethbridge College				
4-year Bachelor of Applied Science (Environmental Assessment and Restoration)	*Organizational & Program*	*Under Review*		
4-year Bachelor of Applied Science (Natural Resource Management)	*Organizational & Program*	*Under Review*		
Mount Royal University (formerly Mount Royal College)				
4-year Bachelor of Education (Elementary)	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approval Deferred*	*1 Oct 2009*
5-year Bachelor of Education (Elementary) / Bachelor of Arts combined degree	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approval Deferred*	*1 Oct 2009*
5-year Bachelor of Education (Elementary) / Bachelor of Science combined degree	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approval Deferred*	*1 Oct 2009*
4-year Bachelor of Education (Secondary)	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approval Deferred*	*1 Oct 2009*
5-year Bachelor of Education (Secondary) / Bachelor of Arts combined degree	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approval Deferred*	*1 Oct 2009*
5-year Bachelor of Education (Secondary) / Bachelor of Science combined degree	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approval Deferred*	*1 Oct 2009*

Alberta Public Institutions (continued) Program	Type of Review	CAQC Recommendation	Minister's Decision	Date**
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT)				
4-year Bachelor of Health Informatics	*Program*	*Under Review*		
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT)				
4-year Bachelor of Business Administration (Accounting)	*Organizational & Program*	*To Approve*	*Approval Deferred*	*10 July 2009*
4-year Bachelor of Science in Internetworking	*Program*	*Under Review*		
4-year Bachelor of Science in Construction Project Management	*Program*	*Under Review*		
University of Alberta				
5-year Bachelor of Music / Bachelor of Education (Elementary) combined degree	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*17 Aug 2009*
Master of Arts in Native Studies	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approval Deferred*	*5 Jan 2010*
Master of Education in Health Sciences Education	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*1 Feb 2010*
4-year Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*4 March 2010*
University of Calgary				
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Greek and Roman Studies	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*26 May 2009*
4-year Bachelor of Music (Integrated Studies)	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Under Consideration*	
University of Lethbridge				
4-year Bachelor of Science (Remote Sensing)	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*26 Nov 2009*

Alberta Private Institutions Program	Type of Review	CAQC Recommendation	Minister's Decision	Date**
Ambrose University College				
4-year Bachelor of Business Administration	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*5 Jan 2010*
4-year Bachelor of Music	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*9 Dec 2009*
2-year Bachelor of Education (After Degree) Elementary Education	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*20 Jan 2010*
Canadian University College				
4-year Bachelor of Arts (International Studies)	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*9 March 2010*
DeVry Institute of Technology-Calgary				
Bachelor of Technical Management	*Program*	*Under Review*		

Non-Resident (Out-of-Province) Institutions Program	Type of Review	CAQC Recommendation	Minister's Decision	Date**
Andrews University				
Master of Science in Administration (International Development)	*Program*	*Under Review*		
Cape Breton University				
Master of Business Administration in Community Economic Development	*Program*	*Under Review*		
City University of Seattle				
Master of Counselling	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*10 July 2009*

Non-Resident (Out-of-Province) Institutions (continued) Program	Type of Review	CAQC Recommendation	Minister's Decision	Date**
Cornell University-Queen's University				
Executive Master of Business Administration	*Program*	*Under Review*		
Gonzaga University				
Master of Counselling	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*3 Feb 2009*
Master of Education (School Administration)	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*18 March 2009*
Loma Linda University				
Master of Science in Marital and Family Therapy	*Program*	*Under Review*		
Queen's University				
Executive Master of Business Administration	*Program*	*Under Review*		
Accelerated Master of Business Administration	*Program*	*Under Review*		
University of Portland				
Master of Education (Leadership)	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Under Consideration*	

* Fully Expedited Review

** Any program that is not implemented within three years of approval may be subject to additional review.

Evaluation Teams

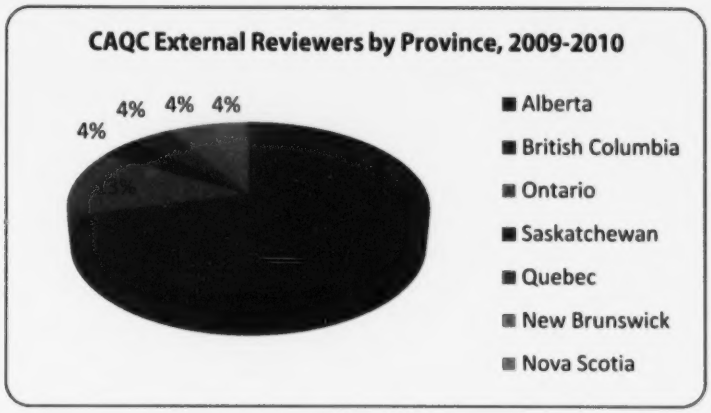
As noted in Council's fourth operating principle, peer evaluation forms the basis of Council's assessment of the applicant's ability to implement and sustain degree programs and the quality of the proposed program. Recruitment of appropriate external experts to assist with Council's evaluations is important as the quality of the reviewers affects the quality of the review, which in turn affects the quality of the program under review. Council ensures that the external reviewers' perspectives brought to the evaluation process are a judicious mix of relevant technical expertise and a detached external stakeholder point of view. Depending on the circumstance, Council employs three types of teams of experts in evaluating proposed programs and monitoring approved degree programs:

- *Organizational evaluation teams* assist Council in examining the extent to which the systems and processes of the institution are clearly established to achieve excellence in learning at the degree level.
- *Program evaluation teams* help ensure that degree programs offered by institutions are of an acceptably high quality, and comparable in quality to other degree programs in Alberta and Canada.
- *Comprehensive evaluation teams* help fulfill Council's role with respect to periodic evaluations of institutions offering approved degree programs.

The recruitment and preparation of teams is managed by the Secretariat. Prior to their site visits, teams have an orientation meeting with the Chair (or alternate) and are provided with a comprehensive binder outlining their roles and responsibilities, the assessment standards to be used and detailed information about the proposed program and/or the institution. The Director or Manager of the Secretariat coordinates each review and acts as an advisor to the team during the site visit. Once the review is completed, team members and the institution are asked to provide feedback about their experience and offer suggestions for improving the review process. At its September 2009 annual retreat, Council members reviewed the feedback provided by the evaluation teams as well as the institutions. The feedback indicates a high level of satisfaction with the work of Council and its Secretariat.

Evaluators are typically senior academics and administrators from universities or other institutions offering approved degree programs in Alberta or elsewhere in Canada. In 2009-2010, Council's program and comprehensive evaluation teams included 24 experts (12 from Alberta

and 12 from other Canadian provinces).



Council wishes to acknowledge the commitment of the following reviewers who provided evaluation services during the reporting year:

Dr. Mohamed Al-Hussein	*University of Alberta*
Dr. John Boersema	*Redeemer University College*
Dr. Robert Burkinshaw	*Trinity Western University*
Dr. Allan Cahoon	*Royal Roads University*
Dr. Terrance Carson	*University of Alberta*
Dr. Myer Horowitz	*Royal Roads University*
Dr. Vern Jones	*University of Calgary*
Dr. Frank Maurer	*University of Calgary*
Dr. Mary McGillivray	*St. Francis Xavier University*
Dr. Roberta McKay	*University of Alberta*
Dr. Osama Moselhi	*Concordia University*
Dr. Allen Pearson	*University of Western Ontario*
Dr. Stephen Randall	*University of Calgary*
Dr. Jeff Rankin	*University of New Brunswick*
Dr. Katherine Sanford	*University of Victoria*
Dr. Bernadette Schell	*University of Ontario Institute of Technology*
Dr. Hank Stam	*University of Calgary*
Dr. Mark Swanson	*Concordia University College of Alberta*
Dr. Peter Tiessen	*University of Alberta*
Dr. Ganesh Vaidyanathan	*University of Saskatchewan*
Dr. Harro Van Brummelen	*Trinity Western University*
Dr. Hussein Warsame	*University of Calgary*
Dr. Earle Waugh	*University of Alberta*
Dr. Ian Winchester	*University of Calgary*

External experts engaged by Council adhere to Council's Code of Conduct, which ensures that they avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest including that which may impair or impugn the integrity, impartiality or independence of Council. The final decisions on all matters relating to an evaluation team rest with Council, including the team's membership and its terms of reference.

Monitoring and Periodic Review

The *Programs of Study Regulation (91/2009)* outlines Council's responsibilities with respect to the monitoring of approved degrees. Should it determine that the institution no longer meets the required organizational conditions or that the approved program no longer meets required standards of quality, Council may recommend that approval be cancelled. To date, no programs have been recommended for cancellation.

Monitoring may take various forms including annual reporting, periodic reporting, comprehensive evaluations, as well as subsequent evaluations. Council may also ask for reporting prior to, or immediately after, implementation of a new program.

Annual Reporting

During 2009-2010, Council continued to refine its annual reporting processes for both public and private institutions. In particular, it introduced its new monitoring templates for submitting annual updates on faculty and scholarly activity in approved degree programs to private institutions. These templates were used by public institutions last year. Based on the feedback received from private institutions, Council and the Secretariat will finalize the templates prior to

the 2009-2010 annual reporting by institutions. With the exception of Alberta universities, all institutions (including non-resident institutions) are required to submit their annual reporting by 1 November each year to enable Council to review them at its December meeting and to provide timely feedback regarding approved degree programs.

Comprehensive Evaluation

In addition to annual reporting, Council also conducts comprehensive reviews. Normally Council conducts at least one comprehensive evaluation (a combined organizational and program(s) evaluation) of an institution offering approved degree programs in Alberta after five years from the time of initial degree granting approval. A subsequent comprehensive evaluation may be conducted. During the reporting year, a first comprehensive evaluation was completed with respect to Ambrose University College and the approved degrees it has been offering since 2000. Council reaffirmed the approval of Ambrose's existing baccalaureate degree programs and made a decision to conduct a second comprehensive evaluation of the institution in 2013-2014.

It also completed a first comprehensive evaluation of St. Mary's University College and the approved degree programs it has been offering since 2004. Council reaffirmed the approval of St. Mary's existing baccalaureate degree programs and agreed that a second comprehensive evaluation would not be required.

Council expects to conduct comprehensive evaluations according to the following schedule:

Institution	*Academic Year*
Grant MacEwan University	*2011-2012*
Mount Royal University	*2012-2013*
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology	*2012-2013*
Ambrose University College	*2013-2014*

Membership of Council

Council consists of eleven members appointed by the Minister, including a chair and 10 members representing expertise in the post-secondary system (brief biographical information about the members is available in Appendix 3). Services of a Secretariat are provided to Council by the Minister.

During the reporting year, Dr. Peter Mahaffy and Dr. Art Quinney were appointed to Council for a three-year term to replace two founding members who completed their term – Dr. Dianne Kieren and Dr. Keith Ward. Council extends its gratitude to these individuals for their exceptional contributions to its work.

Council's Chair, Dr. Ronald Bond, and Dr. Leo Mos were reappointed for a second term.

The following 13 individuals served on Council in 2009-2010:

Chair	*Ronald Bond*	
Members	*Keith Ward (Vice Chair, until 1 July 2009)*	*Greg Moran*
	Patricia Clements (Vice Chair, from September 2009 onwards)	*Leo Mos*
	Dianne Kieren (until 1 July 2009)	*Margaret Patterson*
	Robert Lockwood	*Art Quinney*
	Peter Mahaffy	*Cliff Soper*
	Peter Meekison	*Mo Watanabe*

CAQC Website

CAQC's website is an important tool to enhance Council's communication with its stakeholders and members of the public. The website (www.caqc.gov.ab.ca) includes information about Council, the application process for new degree proposals, its assessment standards, relevant publications, its recommendations and applications under review, as well as links to relevant legislation and related organizations. To increase accessibility and currency of its information to stakeholders, Council's website was refined and continuously updated in 2009-2010. In particular, revisions and updates were applied to the *CAQC Handbook*.

As shown below, activity on the website was brisk during 2009-2010. The number of visits increased by 12% in comparison with the previous reporting period.

	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10
Visits	4,805	4,979	5,431	5,002	5,337	5,332	6,100	5,363	4,846	5,318	4,695	4,754
Visitors	1,179	1,016	997	954	991	1,018	1,103	1,033	867	1,037	1,021	1,110

CAQC Secretariat

The CAQC Secretariat assists the Chair and Council in their activities by providing advice on matters of policy and procedure, organizing meetings, helping to set meeting agendas, and preparing publications. It also provides information and advice in response to inquiries from various agencies, current and prospective applicants, and members of the public about matters related to quality assurance of new degree programs. As well, it coordinates all aspects with respect to Council's external evaluation teams and the Secretariat's Director or Manager serves as an advisory member on the teams. The Secretariat also actively participates in the work of the Ministry's committees working on key initiatives.

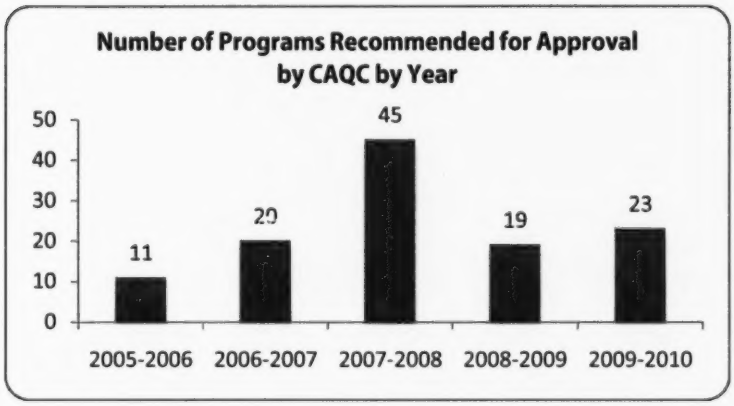
As of 31 March 2010, the Secretariat consists of:

Director	*Marilyn Patton*
Manager	*Guy Germain*
Research Officer	*Alex Makar*
Research & Policy Analyst Intern	*Lindsay Manz*
Office Manager	*Shirley Miskowicz-Thomson*
Administrative Assistant Intern	*Olga Romero*

A Glance Back

Council has contributed significant value to the post-secondary system in Alberta by ensuring that newly approved degree programs provide quality educational opportunities to learners that are on par with programs offered in other jurisdictions. One of Council's key impacts has been the promotion of an enhanced quality culture in Campus Alberta. Since its creation in 2004, Council has reviewed and recommended approval of 118 degree programs including 91 baccalaureate and 27 graduate programs. Of these 118 programs, 53 were proposed by Baccalaureate and Applied Studies Institutions and Polytechnical Institutions, 44 by Comprehensive Academic and Research Institutions, 16 by resident Independent Academic Institutions and five by non-resident institutions.[1]

[1] For information on classification of post-secondary institutions in Alberta within the six sector model see *CAQC Handbook*, sec. 2.1.2 at www.caqc.gov.ab.ca.



In the process of carrying out its responsibilities Council has acquired extensive experience in evaluating and monitoring degree programs, including those offered by non-resident institutions. Some of the practices encouraged by Council to enhance quality of programs and to improve the efficiency of the review process include:

- Review process – Council considers the review process to be an important tool in enhancing the quality of programs. The application of Council's quality standards to proposals referred to it ultimately strengthens, we believe, degree programs by stimulating internal review and self-reflection within institutions. This is particularly evident in interdisciplinary programs and those relying on inter-institutional consultation and collaboration. Council also encourages institutions to conduct regular periodic and systematic review of programs, which ought to include the use of external reviewers.
- Peer review – As peer review is one of the central elements in evaluating new degree proposals, Council's evaluation teams are composed of senior academics and academic administrators with substantial experience in developing, delivering and assessing similar programs. Experience has confirmed that it is important to have a mix of reviewers from various jurisdictions. Thus, in 2009-2010, 50% of reviewers were recruited from other Canadian jurisdictions.

- Complete documentation – The duration of Council's review process can be affected by the completeness of the documentation submitted by an institution. Even after a proposal has been referred to it, Council cannot begin its review until it receives full documentation. As well, a delay can occur when Council or its PRSC needs additional information and/or clarification on specific issues or the proposal does not include the report of at least one independent external expert and the institution's response to it. In order to reduce unnecessary delays, institutions are encouraged to submit complete documentation and discuss any process-related issues with the CAQC Secretariat.
- Sharing effective practices – As Alberta's post-secondary system is composed both of institutions that have been offering degree programming for a long time as well as institutions that are new to this endeavour, the system as a whole benefits from sharing institutional quality assurance practices. This is especially important as new degree granting institutions develop their internal quality assurance systems.
- Appropriateness of degree program nomenclature – One of the issues facing Council in evaluating programs proposed by non-Canadian non-resident institutions (especially for practically oriented masters-level programs) is that some of them use nomenclature that is quite unfamiliar within Canadian jurisdictions. In such cases, Council has had to work with these institutions to determine the most appropriate nomenclature.

Looking Forward

In the coming year, Council will focus on assessing and improving the efficiency of its operations through continuing to

- review its operating principles;
- gather feedback from reviewers and applicant institutions following each site visit and consult stakeholders on the development and refinement of its policies, procedures and standards;
- work with AUA on refinements to the program templates project; and
- revise its Competencies, Chair and Member Position Descriptions, and Code of Conduct to ensure compliance with requirements of the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act*.

As well, based on its accumulated experience from past reviews, Council will continue to refine its evaluation processes and requirements, including its

- comprehensive evaluation process and documentation requirements; and
- review process and documentation requirements for non-resident institutions.

Council also expects to

- finalize reviews of the 14 proposals currently under its consideration and deal with any new referrals;
- give increased attention to refining its expectations and processes with respect to the monitoring of approved degree programs;
- continue working with AUA on the possibility of developing a joint pilot project for monitoring, through an audit process, its members' internal quality assurance review practices;
- hold discussions with its stakeholders designed to explore ways of developing innovative programming that meets our quality standards, while respecting the current fiscal realities;
- continue working to enhance the quality of degree programs in Alberta and the recognition of its assessments, both nationally and internationally, by (i) maintaining relationships with its provincial and regional counterparts and with pan-Canadian quality assurance initiatives to promote confidence in the Alberta "brand", and (ii) proceed with collaborative initiatives with British Columbia's Degree Quality Assessment Board and its Secretariat on mutual recognition of quality assessments of degree programs in both provinces;
- continue its environmental scanning of international developments in quality assurance practices, including changes that are taking place in Europe under the Bologna process;

- broaden its collaborative initiatives with ACAT in the areas that support the fulfillment the mandates of both councils; and
- participate further in the development of a Quality Assurance Framework for the post-secondary system, as well as other important Ministry projects and initiatives.

In sum, Council appreciates being consulted by the Assistant Deputy Minister and other Ministry officials on the development of important Ministry initiatives (such as the Quality Assurance Framework) and we are eager to work with officials within the Ministry and the post-secondary institutions in the province to celebrate the strength of the system we have, while considering how that system can be further strengthened in the years ahead.

Appendix 1

Campus Alberta Quality Council Key Operating Principles

1. The Council **standards** are appropriate to the program level/scope and are comparable to national and international standards. Within this context, Council is open to flexibility and innovation in degree programming.
2. The **best interests of learners** are at the core of Council's activities as it assesses and monitors the quality of degree programs.

Revised to add Principle 2, May 2008

3. The Council respects the foundational role of **academic freedom** in the provision of high quality post-secondary programs.
4. **Peer evaluation** is an essential component of the Council's evaluation of post-secondary degree programs.
5. **Stakeholder participation** is an integral part of the degree appraisal process.
6. The Council acts to develop and retain **autonomy** from influences that may undermine or otherwise affect trust in its functions and decisions.
7. The Council exhibits **equity** in all aspects of its operation. Equity encompasses the idea that applicants are treated fairly but not necessarily identically.
8. The Council exhibits and promotes **openness and transparency** in all its practices and policies. In its commitment to consistency of decision making, the Council aims to develop public trust that all eligible institutions meeting the Council's standards and practices will be able to apply and take part fully in the functioning of the Council under its mandate, administration and processes.
9. Processes established by the Council are considered **iterative** in nature. This means that the Council's decisions and judgments have the potential for continuous development and improvement of institutional degree programs.
10. Within the context of its iterative processes, the Council acts **expeditiously** and in keeping with principles of natural justice.
11. The Council is committed to the **quality assurance review** of its own activities and to the interprovincial sharing of best practices in post-secondary degree program quality assessment. Its processes are dynamic and continuously improving.
12. The Council exhibits and promotes **appreciation of institutional diversity** and respect for institutional autonomy and integrity among the institutions proposing degree programs.
13. The Council ensures that approved degree programs and Council decisions with respect to them are **monitored** and the extent of monitoring is appropriate to the experience of the institution.
14. Members and peer reviewers shall act in accordance with **ethical standards** and abide by Council's code of conduct which includes provisions on conflict of interest.

Appendix 2

Principal Documents and Publications of the Campus Alberta Quality Council

- ***CAQC Handbook: Quality Assessment and Quality Assurance***

Documents and publications not included in the *CAQC Handbook*:

- ***Collaborative Degree Protocol***

To assist institutions in preparing submissions for new collaborative arrangements that were not assessed as part of the initial program proposal review, this document outlines specific expectations with respect to the information institutions must submit to Council.

- ***Guide for Teams Conducting Comprehensive Evaluations***

The guide provides information for external evaluation teams with respect to their role and responsibilities when conducting comprehensive evaluations. The "CAQC Code of Conduct" is included. The guide is reviewed and updated as needed.

- ***Guide for Teams Conducting Evaluations of Proposed Graduate Programs (Non-Resident Institutions)***

The guide provides information for external evaluation teams with respect to their role and responsibilities when conducting evaluations of graduate programs proposed by non-resident institutions. The "Framework for Graduate Program Evaluation" and the "CAQC Code of Conduct" are included. The guide is reviewed and updated as needed.

- ***Guide for Teams Conducting Evaluations of Proposed Graduate Programs (Resident Alberta Institutions)***

The guide provides information for external evaluation teams with respect to their role and responsibilities when conducting evaluations of graduate programs. The "Framework for Graduate Program Evaluation" and the "CAQC Code of Conduct" are included. The guide is reviewed and updated as needed.

- ***Guide for Teams Conducting Evaluations of Proposed Undergraduate Programs***

The guide provides information for external evaluation teams with respect to their role and responsibilities when evaluating proposed undergraduate programs. The "Framework for Program Evaluation" and the "CAQC Code of Conduct" are included. The guide is reviewed and updated as needed.

- ***Guide for Teams Conducting Organizational Evaluations (Resident Alberta Institutions)***

The guide provides information for external evaluation teams with respect to their role and responsibilities when conducting organizational evaluations of first-time applicants. The "Framework for Organizational Evaluation and Scorebook" and the "CAQC Code of Conduct" are included. The guide is reviewed and updated as needed.

- ***Hosting a Site Visit***

This document offers guidance to institutions to assist them in preparing for a site visit by a Council-appointed external evaluation team.

- ***Toolkit for Off-site and Cross-border Delivery of Programs***

The toolkit provides resources for institutions planning to deliver programs off-site or internationally and includes principles, a checklist and an annotated bibliography.

Appendix 3

Campus Alberta Quality Council Member Information

(as of March 2010)

Dr. Ronald Bond (Chair) *Term: 13 July 2009 to 12 July 2012*

Dr. Bond is Emeritus Provost and Vice-President (Academic) at the University of Calgary and a former Professor of English and Dean of Humanities there.

Dr. Patricia Clements, Vice-Chair *Term: 28 July 2008 to 27 July 2011*

Dr. Clements is Professor Emeritus of English and former Dean of Arts at the University of Alberta. She is a former President of the Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada, and has served on the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Dr. Robert Lockwood *Term: 24 July 2007 to 23 July 2010*

Dr. Lockwood has a long history of program development with Olds College where he has held several positions including eleven years as Vice President (Academic).

Dr. Peter Mahaffy *Term: 13 July 2009 to 12 July 2012*

Dr. Mahaffy is Professor of Chemistry at The King's University College, and Chair of the Chemistry Education Committee of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry. He is a recipient of the National 3M Teaching Award and a previous member of the Private Colleges Accreditation Board.

Dr. Peter Meekison *Term: 2 July 2007 to 1 July 2010*

Dr. Meekison is a University Professor Emeritus, former Chair of the department of Political Science, former Balzberg Distinguished Chair in Constitutional Law, and previous Vice-President (Academic) at the University of Alberta. He is an adjunct professor of Political Science at the University of Victoria.

Dr. Greg Moran *Term: 28 July 2008 to 27 July 2011*

Dr. Moran, former Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Western Ontario, is currently a professor of Psychology. He is a former Chair of the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents and a consultant to the Council of Ontario Universities and the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

Dr. Leo Mos *Term: 13 July 2009 to 12 July 2012*

Dr. Mos is a Professor of Psychology and Linguistics at the University of Alberta, has served as Chair of The King's University College Senate and is the former Director for the Centre for Advanced Study in Theoretical Psychology at the University of Alberta.

Dr. Margaret Patterson *Term: 2 September 2008 to 1 September 2011*

Dr. Patterson, former Chief Academic Officer and Associate Vice-President (Student Affairs) at the University of Calgary, is a professor of Higher Education Leadership, the founder and Director of the Canadian Centre for the Study of Higher Education, and is a former member of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer.

Dr. Art Quinney *Term:13 July 2009 to 12 July 2012*

Dr. Quinney is a professor emeritus of the University of Alberta, former Chair of the Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies, and former Dean of Physical Education and Recreation. He was Associate Vice-President (Academic) from 2000-2002 and Deputy Provost from 2002-2007.

Dr. Cliff Soper *Term: 2 July 2007 to 1 July 2010*

Dr. Soper is a retired chemistry instructor and administrator at Red Deer College. He has also served as Dean of Health and Science, acting Vice-President (Academic) and Director of the IKON Learning Innovation and Teaching Excellence Centre.

Dr. Mo Watanabe *Term: 2 July 2007 to 1 July 2010*

Dr. Watanabe is Emeritus Professor of Medicine at the University of Calgary, former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, and past Chair of several provincial and national health and research committees.

www.caqc.gov.ab.ca